

# Words In The News

## Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets  
with answers

Hostage gang arrested in  
Venezuela –  
30 January 2008



**BBC WORLD SERVICE**  
LEARNING ENGLISH



[bbclearningenglish.com](http://bbclearningenglish.com)

# BBC Learning English – Words in the News

## Hostage gang arrested in Venezuela – 30 January 2008

### CONTENTS

---

1. Level, topic, language, aims, materials
2. Lesson stages
3. Student worksheets 1, 2, 3
4. Answers
5. News story

**Level:** Intermediate and above

**Topic:** Venezuelan robbers hold up a bank and take hostages.

**Language:** Vocabulary of a news report

**Aims:**

Reading skills	– Understanding a short news report
Language skills	– Vocabulary – homonyms – words spelled the same with different meanings
Speaking skills	– Planning a bank robbery

**Materials:**

Worksheet 1	– Comprehension questions
Worksheet 2	– Vocabulary matching task
Worksheet 3	– Grammar/language focus – vocabulary

News story – Available online at:

[http://www.bbclearningenglish.com/newsenglish/witn/2008/01/080130\\_venezuela\\_siege.shtml](http://www.bbclearningenglish.com/newsenglish/witn/2008/01/080130_venezuela_siege.shtml)

**Preparation:** Before the lesson, make enough copies of worksheets 2 and 3 so that there is 1 worksheet for every 4 – 5 students. Cut up the vocabulary and explanations to make a matching exercise. Students also need one copy each of worksheet 1.

If possible, bring some pictures from magazines or the internet of banks, robbers and the other words suggested in Part A of the lesson plan

## **BBC Learning English – Words in the News**

### **Hostage gang arrested in Venezuela – 30 January 2008**

#### **LESSON STAGES**

##### **A Stimulate student interest in text**

Put these words (or pictures) on the board and ask students to make up a story using them:

a gun      a bank      lots of money      an ambulance      bank customers      the police

Ask a few students to tell their short stories to the rest of the class.

Tell students they are going to read a text later with all these elements in it. Ask students if they or anyone they know have been a victim of theft. Ask them to tell the class what happened and how they felt about the theft.

##### **B Pre-teach essential vocabulary**

Elicit/present key vocabulary that students need either to understand the key points in the text or to understand and/or answer any questions that you'll set them later in the lesson. The vocabulary is from Words in the News (so you can elicit the vocabulary by using the explanations provided online or below).

You could either pre-teach the vocabulary at this stage of the lesson or you could use the vocabulary building activity from further down in this lesson plan. Have students working together in small groups and ask them to try to match the vocabulary with the definitions. Encourage them to work with the other groups to pool their knowledge.

When they have done as much as they can, if they have dictionaries, ask them to look up the words to check their answers and to find out the definitions of any words they are not sure of. If they don't have dictionaries, check their answers and give them help with any words they aren't sure of.

Whichever method you use to elicit/present the vocabulary, you should then model it (say it clearly, highlighting the word stress) and get them to repeat the words after you.

##### **tense standoff**

nervous and anxious disagreement where neither side is willing to change or compromise

##### **the siege**

the situation where a place (here, the bank) is controlled by people with guns who will not allow the other people there to leave freely

##### **hostage**

a person who is held against his/her will and not released until certain things are done (e.g. money is paid or here, the robbers are allowed to leave the bank without the police arresting them)

##### **hold-up**

when a person uses violence or the threat of violence to steal something

## **BBC Learning English – Words in the News**

### **Hostage gang arrested in Venezuela – 30 January 2008**

#### **a deal was struck and the robbers fled**

an agreement (here, between the police and the thieves) was reached and the thieves escaped

#### **emerged looking emotional**

came out showing very strong feeling or emotions (usually anger or sadness)

#### **they wouldn't be followed**

no-one would go after them or try to catch them

#### **surrounded**

here, the police stood in a circle around the robbers, giving them no chance to escape

#### **captives**

people who are held against their will

#### **ordeal**

very difficult, unpleasant or painful experience

### **C Written record of vocabulary**

Write the words on the board, eliciting spelling as you write. Elicit and show the word stress of each item and word class, if appropriate.

Give students some time to copy the boardwork into their notebooks.

Boardwork:

**tense standoff**

**the siege**

**hostage**

**hold-up**

**a deal was struck and the robbers fled**

**emerged looking emotional,**

**they wouldn't be followed**

**surrounded**

**captives**

**ordeal**

## **BBC Learning English – Words in the News**

### **Hostage gang arrested in Venezuela – 30 January 2008**

#### **D Set a skimming question**

Tell the students they are going to read a text about a bank robbery. Put this question on the board:

Which of these statements is/are true?

- A. All the hostages were killed
- B. Some of the hostages were killed
- C. Some of the hostages were shot
- D. None of the hostages were shot

Students read text the first time.

Give them a time limit (1 - 2 minutes) to read the text quickly to find the answer to the question. They do not need to understand the details of the text to answer it.

#### **E Check answers**

D – None of the hostages were shot. Paragraph 4 says 'a tense ordeal ending without a shot'.

#### **F Set specific information questions**

Hand out worksheet 1 or use the online quiz. Students complete the worksheet to help them understand the text in more detail. Give them a time limit (5 - 6 minutes) to read the text a second time in more detail and to answer the questions.

#### **G Check answers**

Elicit True or False answers. Direct attention to a particular paragraph if an answer is wrong to try to elicit the correct answer (see worksheet 1 and answer key).

#### **H Vocabulary consolidation/building**

Students do the vocabulary matching exercise (worksheet 2 that you cut up before the lesson). In small groups they match the correct word with the right definition.

#### **I Check answers**

Elicit answers. If an answer is wrong, ask other students to try to elicit the correct answer.

#### **J Vocabulary focus: Vocabulary – homonyms**

Put the word 'book' on the board and elicit more than one meaning for it from the students. (*a noun - Something that you read or a verb - reserve a table in a restaurant*).

Then use worksheet 3 to focus on other homonyms from today's text.

## **BBC Learning English – Words in the News**

### **Hostage gang arrested in Venezuela – 30 January 2008**

#### **K Check answers**

If an answer is wrong, ask other students to try to elicit the correct answer (see worksheet 3 and answer key).

#### **L Follow-up activity: Speaking**

Tell the students they are going to rob a bank. Ask for suggestions of things they will need to do it successfully. Write their suggestions on the board (and add more if necessary) so that you have a list of 15 items. (For example, masks, gloves, a gun, security guards uniform, etc.).

Each person should decide on the three items s/he wants to take. Give them a minute or two to decide on their items. Then split the class into small groups of four or five. Each group is only allowed to five items in total for their bank robbery. Each person should explain to the group why they have selected each item, what it can be used for and why it is better than the suggestions other people made. The group must agree on the final five items they will use in their bank robbery.

Circulate, while they are working, giving help with grammar and spelling, if necessary.

#### **M Feedback**

Ask a few groups to tell the class what they chose and why. Give praise for correct language, and give feedback on incorrect language. You could write some example phrases or sentences on the board and elicit from students which ones are correct and which ones are wrong and why.

**BBC Learning English – Words in the News**  
**Hostage gang arrested in Venezuela – 30 January 2008**

**STUDENT WORKSHEET 1**

---

**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

**Are the following sentences true or false?**

1.	The kidnappers kept the people in the bank for less than one day.	T/F
2.	While they were help hostage, the people in the bank had no contact with the outside world.	T/F
3.	Initially the police said they wouldn't negotiate with the robbers but later they did.	T/F
4.	When the hostages were released from the bank they looked calm.	T/F
5.	The police said that they wouldn't go after the robbers but actually they did.	T/F
6.	In the end, the robbers let all of their hostages go free.	T/F

**BBC Learning English – Words in the News**  
**Hostage gang arrested in Venezuela – 30 January 2008**

**STUDENT WORKSHEET 2**

---

**VOCABULARY**

**Match these words and phrases to their definitions.**

1.	<b>tense standoff</b>	A.	no-one would go after them or try to catch them
2.	<b>the siege</b>	B	when a person uses violence or the threat of violence to steal something
3.	<b>hostage</b>	C.	people who are held against their will
4.	<b>hold-up</b>	D.	nervous and anxious disagreement where neither side is willing to change or compromise
5.	<b>a deal was struck and the robbers fled</b>	E.	very difficult, unpleasant or painful experience
6.	<b>emerged looking emotional</b>	F.	a person who is held against his/her will and not released until certain things are done (e.g. money is paid or here, the robbers are allowed to leave the bank without the police arresting them)
7.	<b>they wouldn't be followed</b>	G.	came out showing very strong feeling or emotions (usually anger or sadness)
8.	<b>surrounded</b>	H.	the situation where a place (here, the bank) is controlled by people with guns who will not allow the other people there to leave freely
9.	<b>captives</b>	I.	an agreement (here, between the police and the thieves) was reached and the thieves escaped
10.	<b>ordeal</b>	J.	here, the police stood in a circle around the robbers, giving them no chance to escape



# BBC Learning English – Words in the News

## Hostage gang arrested in Venezuela – 30 January 2008

### STUDENT WORKSHEET 3

---

#### HOMONYMS

Homonyms are words which are spelled the same but which have different meanings. For example, *book* can be a noun and means *something that you read* or it can be a verb that means *reserve a table in a restaurant*.

Here are some homonyms from today's text. Use your dictionary to match each word with the correct definition. Then, in the 3rd column, tick the word that is used in today's text. The first word has been for you.

	word	definition	used in the text
1.	<i>tense</i> (noun)	<b>G</b>	
2.	<i>tense</i> (adjective)	<b>I</b>	<b>ü</b>
3.	bank (noun)		
4.	bank (noun)		
5.	quick (noun)		
6.	quick (adjective)		
7.	spotted (adjective)		
8.	spotted (verb)		
9.	managed (verb)		
10.	managed (verb)		
11.	calls (verb)		
12.	calls (verb)		
13.	deal (noun)		
14.	deal (verb)		
15.	free (adjective)		
16.	free (adjective)		

- A. costs nothing
  - B. not slow
  - C. succeeded in doing something
  - D. seen
  - E. phones
  - F. gives someone or something a name
  - G. a verb form which tells you the time something happened
  - H. was responsible for controlling or organizing someone or something (especially a business)
  - I. nervous, not relaxed
  - J. no longer a prisoner
  - K. land or earth which is sloping or raised, usually by the sides of a river
  - L. something that has small, round areas of colour which is a different colour or lighter or darker than the background
  - M. an agreement
  - N. building where you can save or take out your money
  - O. give or share out something
  - P. area of your skin under your finger or toe nails
-

## BBC Learning English – Words in the News

### Hostage gang arrested in Venezuela – 30 January 2008

#### ANSWER KEY

---

#### STUDENT WORKSHEET 1

1. **False** – Paragraph 1 says, 'It was a tense standoff that lasted more than twenty four hours'.
2. **False** – Paragraph 2 says, 'As the hold-up continued, some managed to make calls and send texts to friends and relatives'.
3. **True** – Paragraph 3 says, 'At first authorities refused but finally a deal was struck'.
4. **False** – Paragraph 3 says, 'They emerged looking emotional'.
5. **True** – Paragraph 4 says, 'Police had promised the gunmen that they wouldn't be followed but several hours later they were stopped on a highway and surrounded'.
6. **True** – Paragraph 4 says, 'The men released their remaining captives'.

#### STUDENT WORKSHEET 2

- |             |             |             |             |              |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. <b>D</b> | 2. <b>H</b> | 3. <b>F</b> | 4. <b>B</b> | 5. <b>I</b>  |
| 6. <b>G</b> | 7. <b>A</b> | 8. <b>J</b> | 9. <b>C</b> | 10. <b>E</b> |

#### STUDENT WORKSHEET 3

	word	definition	used in the text
1.	<b>tense (adjective)</b>	<b>G</b>	
2.	<b>tense (noun)</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>ü</b>
3.	bank (noun)	K	
4.	bank (noun)	N	<b>ü</b>
5.	quick (noun)	P	
6.	quick (adjective)	B	<b>ü</b>
7.	spotted (adjective)	L	
8.	spotted (verb)	D	<b>ü</b>
9.	managed (verb)	C	<b>ü</b>
10.	managed (verb)	H	
11.	calls (verb)	E	<b>ü</b>
12.	calls (verb)	F	
13.	deal (noun)	M	<b>ü</b>
14.	deal (verb)	O	
15.	free (adjective)	A	
16.	free (adjective)	J	<b>ü</b>

## BBC Learning English – Words in the News

### Hostage gang arrested in Venezuela – 30 January 2008

*Four gunmen who'd held more than 30 people hostage inside a bank in Venezuela have surrendered to police. The men escaped in an ambulance but were later stopped on a highway and surrounded. This report from James Ingham:*

It was a **tense standoff** that lasted more than twenty four hours - this quiet farming town suddenly at the centre of what many described simply as a nightmare. It began when four gunmen entered the bank intending to make a quick getaway. When they spotted a police patrol, they panicked and so began **the siege** - more than thirty people held **hostage**.

As the **hold-up** continued, some managed to make calls and send texts to friends and relatives. Others stuck hastily written notes in the windows pleading for help. The gunmen were demanding money and a guaranteed escape.

At first authorities refused but finally **a deal was struck and the robbers fled** the building in an ambulance, taking with them five hostages. The others were then able to leave. They **emerged looking emotional**, clearly relieved to be free.

But the drama was not yet over. Police had promised the gunmen that **they wouldn't be followed** but several hours later they were stopped on a highway and **surrounded**. The men released their remaining **captives**, threw down their weapons and surrendered; a tense **ordeal** ending without a shot.

#### **tense standoff**

nervous and anxious disagreement where neither side is willing to change or compromise

#### **the siege**

the situation where a place (here, the bank) is controlled by people with guns who will not allow the other people there to leave freely

#### **hostage**

a person who is held against his/her will and not released until certain things are done (e.g. money is paid or here, the robbers are allowed to leave the bank without the police arresting them)

#### **hold-up**

when a person uses violence or the threat of violence to steal something

#### **a deal was struck and the robbers fled**

an agreement (here, between the police and the thieves) was reached and the thieves escaped

#### **emerged looking emotional**

came out showing very strong feeling or emotions (usually anger or sadness)

#### **they wouldn't be followed**

no-one would go after them or try to catch them

#### **surrounded**

here, the police stood in a circle around the robbers, giving them no chance to escape

#### **captives**

people who are held against their will

#### **ordeal**

very difficult, unpleasant or painful experience